

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5890

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 5126

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, SW, FI

SUBJECT: FINNISH SDP OFFICIAL CARRYING SWEDISH FUNDS IS DETAINED
AT AIRPORT

1. THE TREASURER OF THE FINNISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, PENTTI KETOLA, HIS WIFE AND ANOTHER WOMAN IN HIS COMPANY WERE SEIZED BY POLICE AT ARLANDA AIRPORT LAST SUNDAY WHILE ATTEMPTING TO TAKE SKR. 194,000 OUT OF THE COUNTRY WITHOUT A PERMIT. THE STORY BROKE INTO PRINT ON TUESDAY. KETOLA REPORTEDLY TOLD POLICE HE HAD RECEIVED THE MONEY AT THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY CONGRESS IN STOCKHOLM AND THAT THE FUNDS WERE A CONTRIBUTION FROM THE SWEDISH METALWORKERS UNION TO THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC FACTION OF ITS SISTER ORGANIZATION IN FINLAND. BOTH UNIONS INITIALLY DINIED THEY HAD ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRANSACTION. KETOLA ALSO ADMITTED THAT A COLLEAGUE OF HIS HAD ALREADY SUCCEEDED IN LEAVING SWEDEN WITH SKR. 50,000 AND STATED HE WAS UNAWARE THAT IT IS ILLEGAL TO TAKE MORE THAN SKR. 6,000 OUT OF THE

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COUNTRY WITHOUT SPECIAL PERMISSION FROM THE BANK OF SWEDEN.

SDP ANNOUNCED THAT THE MONEY IN KETOLA'S POSSESSION WAS A GIFT FROM THE PARTY. IT WAS ASSUMED, SAID THE BRIEF PARTY COMMUNIQUE , THAT THE MONEY WOULD BE CARRIED TO FINLAND IN ACCORDANCE WITH SWEDISH CURRENCY EXPORT REGULATIONS THE COMMUNIQUE ADDED THAT THE SDP HAS STANDING PERMISSION FROM THE BANK OF SWEDEN TO TRANSFER MONEY TO OTHER COUNTRIES FOR "SOLIDARITY" PURPOSES. HOWEVER, BOTH THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE BANK OF SWEDEN AND THE HEAD OF THE BANK'S CURRENCY SECTION HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR IGNORANCE ABOUT SUCH AUTHORIZATION WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT IT.

3. AN ARTICLE IN SVENSKA DAGBLADET ADDED TO THE MYSTERY BY REPORTING THAT BERT LUNDIN, PRESIDENT OF THE SWEDISH METALWORKERS, HAD SAID HIS UNION HAS GIVEN SKR. 75,000 TO THE SWEDISH SDP WITH INSTRUCTIONS THAT SUM BE FORWARDED TO FINNISH METALWORKERS WHERE IT IS TO BE SPENT ON INFORMATION ACTIVITIES FOR BOTH FINNISH AND SWEDISH METAL WORKERS. HOWEVER, THE STORY GOES ON TO SAY THAT THE UNION'S GENERAL SECRETARY, HERNY KARLSSON, HAS DENIED THAT ANY SUCH DECISION WAS TAKEN BY THE UNION'S EXECUTIVE BOARD.

4. IN DISCUSSING THIS EPISODE, THE SWEDISH PRESS HAS WIDELY ASSUMED THAT THE MONEY IN QUESTION IS RELATED TO THE UPCOMING CRUCIAL ELECTIONS IN THE FINNISH METALWORKERS UNION IN WHICH CLOSELY MATCHED SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND COMMUNISTS FORCES WILL BE VYING FOR CONTROL. FURTHER ASSUMPTION IS THAT CLANDESTINE NATURE OF CURRENCY TRANSFER WAS RELATED TO POLITICAL SENSITIVITY IN FINLAND TOWARDS PARTIES RECEIVING FUNDS FROM ABROAD. FINALLY, FACT POLICE DETECTED SMUGGLING EFFORT IS ATTRIBUTED TO RECENT IMPLEMENTATION OF TIGHTER SECURITY CONTROLS AT ARLANDA FOR ANTI-TERRORIST PURPOSES.
STRAUSZ-HUPE'

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